

Socio-Cultural and Digital Transformation Research Group (SoDiT)

Our aim is to understand how socio-cultural and digital transformation occurs at the macro and micro levels. We explore how intangible and tangible cultural heritage, urbanization, rurality, digitalization, gender and consumption practices influence the formation of cultural values. We investigate how cultural values are constructed and transformed in the age of social media and internet across different socio-economic groups. Examining the impact of cultural engagement and intercultural dialogue to community building, we are passionate about having an impact on society in terms of the well-being of citizens by promoting identity and belonging, inclusiveness, tolerance and cohesion in broader local, national and international communities, particularly through EU funded projects in Turkey, the Balkans, Euro-Asia and Caucasian Regions. Our unique location in Turkey, between West and East helps us in working with partners from around Europe as well as third countries.

Our team successfully contributed to generate innovative and creative new knowledge about intercultural communication; communication related to minorities, consumption and consumer culture, gender and media, new media pluralism, digital storytelling, alternative/new media in urban and rural contexts, and impact of new technologies on new media literacy. We have also contributed to address acute problems for the region and the EU in open schooling and education of citizens; building a resilience of society and its citizens through implementation of new technologies and media and tools; researching and supporting gender equality.

SoDiT members have extensive experience in project development and implementation including numerous national and international projects for diverse range of stakeholders from governmental, large industry, SME, and NGO sectors.

Our core competencies are generating information through research; providing education and transfer of knowledge that contributes to fostering cultural diversity and social cohesion and the recognition of multiple identities and voices through the projects such as:

- **Mixed Marriages in Turkey and Everyday Life in Balat: 1940-2017** projects focus on the daily life practices of minority groups through both contemporary and historical content through data collected through ethnographic methods. The studies examine both tangible and intangible heritage and contribute to fostering cultural diversity and social cohesion and to the recognition of multiple identities and voices. Participative and qualitative research methods such as ethnographic field studies and observations are used.
- **German-Turkish communication in the workplace: Intercultural communication between Turkish employees and German superiors in a German industrial company** project funded by Munich Ludwig-Maximilian University created innovative approaches for pioneering the use of ethnographic research methodologies in factory settings. The results assess intercultural dialogue, cultural identity and community building on the basis of innovative approaches and a representative geographic coverage of different parts of Europe.
- **The Socio-economic and Cultural Transformation of Rural Spaces: Modernizing and Disappearing Traditional Spaces and Meanings** project funded by TUBITAK (Scientific and Technological Council of Turkey) assess the scale, dimensions and drivers of socio-economic inequalities in rural settings across different village typologies in Turkey and across demographic diversities, paying particular attention to gender differences through content analysis utilizing NVivo, comparative statistical analysis and in-depth interviews. The study addresses the use of technology in the age of social media, internet and television across different socio-economic groups to explain how cultural transformation is occurs at the regional level.
- **South Eastern Anatolia Handbook for Tourist Guides**, funded by Ministry of Culture in Turkey, including tangible and intangible assets, cultural landscapes and seascapes, heritage memory preservation, cultural identities of groups, communities and minorities of the region serves to promote cultural tourism at a regional and national level. This project's output helps South Eastern Anatolia's minority cultures receive special attention for cultural tourism.

We are a reliable partner for large EU Project development and implementation, and a focused team with excellent organizational skills as well as significant academic and institutional experience.

Role as partner in H2020 projects: Project development and implementation in variety of tasks such as; data gathering and processing; design of dissemination strategy or interventions to advance the project's impact and sustainability; providing information and education and ensuring key stakeholder involvement in Istanbul as well as Turkey. We provide new methodologies for capturing the societal value of culture in contemporary societies in cooperation with relevant national governmental and non-governmental organizations, NGO's, and national statistical institutes. We would be delighted to discuss specific project tasks if you see interest for cooperation.

Topics of Interest: Transformations-16-2019; DT-T Transformations -11-2019; Transformations -08-2019; Transformations -03-2018-2019; Transformations -04-2019-2020; DT-Governance-13-2019

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